



Acton Historic District Commission
Meeting June 14, 2011
Minutes

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chair Kathy Acerbo-Bachman.

Also present were Ron Rose (RR), David Honn (DH), Anita Rogers (AR), Pamela Lynn (PL), David Barrat (DB) and Mike Gowing (MG), BoS liaison. Michaela Moran (MM) arrived at 8:35.

Citizens' Concerns: MG announced that there will be a meeting of the chairs of the town's various committees and commissions on July 25, 2011 to promote more inter-agency cooperation. Each of the agencies is to set its top three goals for discussion. One objective is to break down the insularity between the committees and commissions. KAB The HDC will have a special meeting around the end of June to establish its goals. MG wants feedback by 6/18. HDC will begin its 6/28/11 meeting at 6:30 to brainstorm.

The minutes of May 26, 2011 were approved as amended.

543 Mass. Ave. Application 1121. Anita Rogers, liaison, presented pictures of the proposed alteration to show that it is not within our jurisdiction. A certificate of non-applicability will issue.

WAVE There are two issues to be discussed: #1 Extension of Certificate of Appropriateness 906A issued June 26, 2009. This will be the second extension granted for this certificate; #2 The issue of signage – we have never approved a template for a sign before. AR Liaison. It is acceptable to adhere to the template format. PL Are we setting a precedent? Uniformity of the format is a good idea. DH This restrictive format is acceptable within certain parameters. DB There should be more individuality. RR The typeface is too regimented. There should be more flexibility. Variety is important in the context of the village. What if you had just one main tenant?

South Acton Congregational Church-Sign Application #1118: The application is for a new sign with a whole new sign format, post and frame, similar to the sign in front of the West Acton Baptist Church. AR There has been no progress since the last meeting. This is a dry run.

PL to carry on for Terra Friedrichs regarding positioning HDC documents in Docushare. This will include renaming and removing correspondence from the private file to the public access file.

8:10 WAVE Present were Mike Rosenfeld (MR) and Mathias Rosenfeld (Math); On Motion duly seconded it was voted unanimously to take up the WAVE matters five minutes early. Issue #1 the Extension of C of A #906A. There can be no changes to the CoA. AR moved for approval of the extension. There is no reason to revisit the CoA. DH We need to review the conditions before making any decision. 906A was approved in concept. We need to have

more discussion. This should not be rushed. DB wants to see more progress during the extension period. Extensions should not be considered automatic. They must be somehow justified. MG Suggests that the work planned during the extension be split into phases. KAB agrees that there should be phases. Mathias Rosenfeld noted that the blue house had a new roof put on during rehabilitation of that building. On motion of AR duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to extend the Certificate of Appropriateness #906A for one year from June 26, 2011 to June 26, 2012.

WAVE Issue #2-Signage Templates: There are 4 options for tenants; the sign template would stay the same but the sub-signs for individual tenants would change. AR Would like to see chamfer on the edge of individual pieces. No concern with repeating the font. Other fonts might be better. Lighting needs to be more evenly distributed and the lighting fixture needs to be more harmonious. There should be a 24" light. MR The light could be made to match and align with the size of the sign. There could be a bullnose on the inside of the light. They could use a standoff to increase illumination. PL Wants to keep it simple-no variation on fonts. DH Agrees. What if the tenant has the whole floor, if there were only one tenant? Would the sub-sign be increased in space? Would the sign be too large for the design? Can there be a lighting fixture to light up the entire sign? Would like to see a font with serifs. Math. Sans serif fonts are easier to read. RR Standoffs would be an elegant solution. Colors are great. Specify two fonts, two typefaces for text. A slight serif is more readable. The lighting should avoid having the top signs too harshly lit while having no light reach the bottom. MR We can use a more contemporary fixture such as a picture light. MM Passes. KAB The color is beautiful. The fixture will take care of . Explore some fonts with serifs. As many as 10-15 fonts have been approved. Should consider simple classic fonts. Will look at what other historic districts have done. Helvetica is acceptable. We do need to see the final fixture for approval. AR to revisit the issue at the 6/28/11 meeting. MR will send cut sheet of the light fixture. Fonts will be revisited and selected then. MG Will the signs be blank where no tenant is available? Will feedback from tenants be considered?

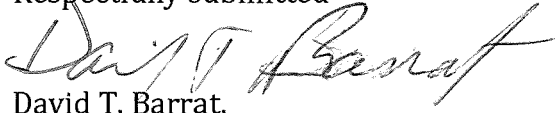
The next meeting will consider a door cut on the right side of gray building.

South Acton Congregational Church-Sign upgrade. Richard Cowley (RC) appeared for the SACC. The sign will be 3' by 2'. MM The same font as on the hanging sign. There needs to be more spacing between the letters. It will be close to the sidewalk. What about the zoning by-law. DH This is a unique building. The proposed sign is not up to the quality of the building. Sign should reflect the uniqueness of the building. RR The building is unique, idiosyncratic. The current sign vertically echoes the steeple. Propose the use of a support reminiscent of the old sign. There are more elegant ways to illuminate the sign with use of L.E.D.s. RC The membership wanted to move away from emphasis on verticality. They felt that it would be more dignified to have the letters be straight across the sign as opposed to arched to follow the shape of the top of the sign. KAB The church is a gem. The sign does not do the building justice. The letters must be painted on wood. The change in the font is discordant. Need to change the case. Play around with the design and consider the visual hierarchy.

81 School Street Application #1120. KAB and MM recused themselves and departed the meeting. DB as Secretary chaired the meeting. Reference is made to the as-built drawings of the proposed rebuilding of the rear of the house. DH, RR and AR provided suggestions regarding design for the owners to consider. We need to see more views and more dimensions. There will be a public hearing on July 12, 2011.

Meeting adjourned at 10:13 PM

Respectfully submitted


David T. Barrat,
Secretary